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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 MCT-01
EURE-00 /059 W
----------151414Z 048179 /45
P R 151157Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9002
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1189

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: INTERIOR MINISTRY OFFICIAL ON SOLVING OF KIDNAPPING

REF: MADRID 1166

1. THE UNDERSECRETARY OF INTERIOR FOR PUBLIC ORDER (HERNANDEZ GIL) FEBRUARY 14 GAVE DCM THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF THE GRAPO KIDNAPPING CASES (HE WAS INDIGNANT THAT ALLEGATIONS WERE ALREADY CIRCULATING IN THE PRESS THAT THE RESCUE WAS PART OF A DEAL MADE BY THE GOVT AND THAT ORIOL HAD IN FACT BEEN HOME TWO DAYS BEFOREHAND):

2. PROGRESS HAD BEEN GRADUAL BUT SLOW, WITH POLICE PICKING UP PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE LEADS AND GRADUALLY
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ASSEMBLING BITS AND PIECES OF DATA, WHICH, FITTED TOGETHER, ENABLED THEM TO IDENTIFY CERTAIN APARTMENTS AND CARS USED BY THE KIDNAPPERS. (HE MADE THE POINT AGAIN THAT GRAPO FINANCED ITSELF EXTREMELY WELL WITH ITS BANK ROBBERIES (STACKS OF CASH FROM THOSE ROBBERIES HAD BEEN FOUND), AND HE FELT THAT FOR THIS REASON IT HAD NO NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS. TWO OR THREE TIMES, AS EARLY AS ONE MONTH

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AFTER ORIOL'S KIDNAPPING, POLICE HAD ARRIVED AT APARTMENTS JUST AFTER THE KIDNAPPERS HAD LEFT. THE POLICE HAD KNOWN THE IDENTITY OF THREE OF THE KIDNAPPERS WITHIN TWO OR THREE DAYS AFTER THE KIDNAPPING OF ORIOL.

3. THE BIG BREAK CAME ON FEBRUARY 7 THE MONDAY BEFORE THE EVENTUAL RESCUE, WHEN ONE OF THOSE PICKED UP IN THE NET GAVE POLICE THE LICENSE NUMBER OF ONE OF THE CARS BEING USED. (HIS INVOLVEMENT WAS MANIFEST SINCE HE HAD ON HIM WHEN ARRESTED THE PISTOL OF ONE OF THE ARMED POLICE SLAIN ON JANUARY 28.) POLICE STAKED OUT THE CAR, AND SEIZED THE MAN WHO CAME TO USE IT. HE TURNED OUT TO BE ENRIQUE CERDAN, ONE OF GRAPO'S TWO PRINCIPAL LEADERS.

4. FOUND ON HIM WERE SEVERAL KEYS, EVIDENTLY TO APARTMENTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, AND THE POLICE PROCEEDED TO TRY THEM OUT. AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF FAILURE, THEY FOUND A DOOR THAT OPENED, AND THERE WAS VILLAESCUSA. HERNANDEZ ADDED THAT HERE THEY HAD BEEN EXTREMELY LUCKY: CERDAN, WHOM THEY HAD PICKED UP HOURS BEFORE, HAD ON LEAVING THE APARTMENT SAID HE WOULD BE BACK AROUND TWO O'CLOCK, PRECISELY THE HOUR POLICE ARRIVED; THE OTHER MAN GUARDING VILLAESCUSA, WHO TURNED OUT TO BE ABELARDO COLLAZO, GRAPO'S OTHER PRINCIPAL LEADER, ASSUMED IT WAS CERDAN RETURNING AND WAS UNABLE TO REACH HIS SUB-MACHINE GUN IN TIME.

5. FACED WITH THEIR RAPIDLY COLLAPSING VENTURE, CERDAN AND COLLAZO OFFERED NO FURTHER RESISTANCE. NOT ONLY DID THEY TEL POLICE WHERE ORIOL WAS, BUT CERDAN WENT ALONG
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IN THE POLICE CAR TO POINT OUT THE PLACE PRECISELY. HERE AGAIN, SAID HERNANDEZ, LUCK INTERVENED ON THE POLICE SIDE: ONE OF THE TWO MEN GUARDING ORIOL WENT OUT FOR MEDICINE FOR THE AILING INFANT MINUTES BEFORE POLICE ARRIVED, AND HE TOOK HIS SUBMACHINE GUN WITH HIM. THUS IN BOTH CASES, THE GUNFIGHT WHICH POLICE HAD SO FEARED FAILED TO MATERIALIZE.

6 REGARDING GRAPO, HERNANDEZ SAID IT HAD NUMBERED NO MORE THAN SOME TWO HUNDRED NATION-WIDE, WITH CELLS IN ONLY A FEW CITIES (INCLUDING BARCELONA AND BILBAO) OUTSIDE OF MADRID. MANY OF THE LEADERS WERE GALLEGOS. IT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED THAT CERDAN HIMSELF HAD KILLED AT LEAST FIVE MEN IN ASSASSINATIONS OCCURRING SINCE 1975. AT LEAST TWO KEY FIGURES REMAINED AT LARGE, THE MAN WHO HAD GONE OUT FOR MEDICINE (FERNANDO HIERRO), AND THE MAN WHO HAD WRITTEN THE COMMUNIQUES (PIO MOA, A JOURNALIST AND THE GRAPO'S "INTELLECTUAL""). HERNANDEZ SEEMED CONFIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT GRAPO HAD ESSENTIALLY BEEN CRACKED, AND HE EXPECTED THAT THE PRESS BAN ON THE CASE WOULD BE LIFTED IN THE NEXT DAY OR

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TWO.(MUCH OF THE FOREGOING WAS RELATED IN THE PRESS THE FOLLOWING DAY AFTER A PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE DGS DIRECTOR).

7. AS FOR THE CASES STILL PENDING, HERNANDEZ SAID, WHILE THE DETAINED ARGENTINE (CESARSKY) SAID HE HAD NOT ACTUALLY FIRED THE SHOT THAT KILLED THE YOUTH IN THE PRO-AMNESTY DEMONSTRATION, HIS MATERIAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE EPISODE SEEMED ESTABLISHED AND HE HAD ADMITTED AT LEAST FIRING IN THE AIR. LESS CLEAR WAS THE SLAYING OF THE LABOR LAWYERS: POLICE WERE NOW PURSUING THE IDEA THAT THE TWO GUNMEN WERE ITALIAN AND MIGHT HAVE ARRIVED THAT DAY FROM ITALY, PERHAPS UNDER CONTRACT. NOT FINDING THE MAN THEY WERE LOOKING FOR, A LABOR AGITATOR NAMED NAVARRO, THEY PANICKED AND SHOT ALL THOSE PRESENT, WAS THE THESIS. STABLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: KIDNAPPING, POLICE INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 15-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
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Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MADRID 1166
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3321145
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTERIOR MINISTRY OFFICIAL ON SOLVING OF KIDNAPPING
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SP, GRAPO, (ORIOL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ef3fcec6-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009